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Bei unserm Gott! Da sagst du wahr.—Lass dich
Umarmen, Mensch.

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NICHOLAS BRETON AND GEORGE GASCOIGNE.

THE connection between Nicholas Breton and George Gascoigne is worthy of a fuller recognition than it has yet received. Breton was a man whose intellectual development was slow; even between the ages of thirty-five and fifty, he shows in some directions not only a remarkable widening of thought, but a very unusual increase of ease in handling his material. To such a man the years from twenty-three to thirty-two were formative years, and this is just the period during which he came most closely under the influence of Gascoigne, who had married his widowed mother. There is no reason to believe that the relation between these poets was other than harmonious, and the nine years seem to have been a time of apprenticeship for the younger. The fact that there is an interval of fifteen years between Breton's first poems, published just before Gascoigne's death, and his next work, strongly suggests that he felt his encouragement and support in authorship to have been removed.

By occasional phrase or allusion, Breton shows his familiarity with Gascoigne's poems, but it speaks well for his literary independence that even his earliest work was in no degree imitative. Indeed, there is far more resemblance between his satire of 1600 than his poems of 1577 and any of Gascoigne's productions. His originality, however, was strictly subjective, and consisted in adding something of his own to whatever established fashion he chose to follow. In delicacy of imagery, he improves greatly upon Gascoigne, who "drowns in dole," and "wallows in joy," whose sighs "boil" out of his heart and "scald" his breast in the process: for example, where Gascoigne says,

"Amid my bale I bathe in bliss,"

Breton writes far more delicately,

"They bide in bliss amid their weary bale."

In satire, both show the same penetrating

but kindly insight; the same power to outline in a few strokes the good and the bad; the same carefulness to blame wrongs rather than individuals; the same sensitive watchfulness not to wound the innocent. Breton's satire was directed chiefly against wealth *versus* poverty; Gascoigne takes higher ground and satirizes "such as love to seem but not to be;" but both write, not like recluses, but like men who knew their world. The world of nature, too, both knew and both loved, but Gascoigne had here the wider view and was by far the keener observer.

In religious poetry, Gascoigne's Calvinistic pessimism would have been as incomprehensible to Breton as the ecstasies of Southwell. At the thought of death, Southwell gazes with rapturous longing into the heaven that opens before him; Gascoigne, with his overflowing vitality, flinches and fears; Breton leisurely sentimentalizes. His hopeful, sunny nature gleams through the slight melancholy that he regards as the proper atmosphere to surround a religious poem. He often cries out of the depths, but he never loses a cheerful confidence in the result of his supplications.

In manly independence Breton is absolutely unbending. Even in those of his dedications and prefaces that are written in the euphuistic vein, so subtle an incentive to flattery, he makes no attempt to curry the favor that removed so many obstacles from the path of the literary man of the sixteenth century. Gascoigne makes appeals for patronage, distasteful as they must have been to him, and he does it in a delightfully persistent, business-like fashion, as if he meant to end a disagreeable matter as soon as possible. Breton manifests a "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" in that he usually asks that his book be read, and evinces a healthy gratitude in advance, but he does not hesitate to sign himself "Your friend as I find cause." Sometimes he does not even ask for a reading, but says, "You shall read it if it shall please you, and consider it as it shall like you."

Of the *Sweet Lullaby*, by far the best of all the poems ascribed to Breton, a word must be said. Grosart somewhat magisterially claims it for Breton, but gives no proof therefor.

Saintsbury says that such a claim "is based on little external and refuted by all internal evidence." I do not find in the poem one trace of the qualities of Breton's thought or of the usual marks of his style. I claim it for Gascoigne on the following grounds:

1. Similarity of phrase with lines in Gascoigne's *Epitaph upon Captain Bouchier*.

- a. "A noble youth of blood and bone
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile."
Lullabie.
- a. He might for birth have boasted noble race,
Yet were his manners meek and always mild.
Who gave a guess by gazing on his face,
And judged thereby might quickly be beguiled."
Epitaph.
- b. "Although a lion in the field,
A lamb in town thou shalt him find."
Lullabie.
- b. "In field a lion and in town a child."
Epitaph.

2. The clear-eyed, unconventional view of right, a characteristic of Gascoigne, but directly opposed to the unvarying conventionality of Breton.

3. The impression given by the poem that it is the product of a moment of inspiration, and not of any poetical industry. These moments of inspiration were as characteristic of the work of Gascoigne, as is the impression of industry given by the works of Breton.

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SOME LINGUISTIC SUGGESTIONS.

I. GERMAN *Mich*.

It is customary to compare this form with Greek $\xi\mu\acute{\epsilon}\ \gamma\epsilon$, $\gamma\epsilon$ being an enclitic by common interpretation. This comparison is but a half-truth: $\xi\mu\acute{\epsilon}\ \gamma\epsilon$ is a false analysis of $*\xi-\mu\acute{\epsilon}\gamma-\epsilon$. In the Sanskrit paradigm of the first person pronoun we have a nom. *ah-am*, dat. *mah-y-am*, and the Aryan character of *mah-* is vouched for by the Latin dat. *mih-i*. German *mich* is an accusative to the Aryan stem $*m\alpha\acute{g}h-$, ¹ Sk. $*mah-am$, Latin $*meh-em$, Gk. (Doric) $*\xi-\mu\acute{\epsilon}\gamma-\alpha$. The Attic $*\xi-\mu\acute{\epsilon}\gamma-\epsilon$ has the same accusative ending as the brief form $\mu-\epsilon$. There is some phonetic difficulty involved in the rep-

¹ By α I indicate a^α .

resentation of the Sk. *h* by Gk. γ and the doublet $g \parallel h$ in Latin (*ego* \parallel *mih-i*). This Scylla of phonetic variation may be avoided by leaping into the Charybdis of interjectional words and recognizing an Aryan interjection $g\alpha$ and another $gh\alpha$ which were somehow merged by agglutination (reprehensible glottogonic device!) with the stem *me* \parallel *e* of the first person pronoun.² For myself I accept the alternative of phonetic variation, but so far am I from rejecting glottogonic methods that I believe it is the true goal, as it will be the great glory, of linguistics to penetrate into the very womb of *Vāch* (the speech-goddess of the Hindus); and so I venture to suggest the *motif* of the stem $*m\alpha\acute{g}h-$, as I have ventured once before³ to suggest the *motif* of the Aryan word for the tongue. The first person stem $*m\alpha\acute{g}h-$ as reconstructed is precisely identical with $*m\alpha\acute{g}h-$, 'great,' which shows in Greek and Latin the same perverseness of a sonant *g* for an aspirate χ , *h*. Can we mediate between "I" and "big," not to fall into the comedy of the English "big I"? I have suggested⁴ that the notion "I" developed from the grunt rendered *hem*, *hum*, *humph*, etc., by English as she is spelt, a grunt whose phonetics has but partial justice done it by the spellings $\mu h \parallel h m$. Astonishment is one of the prevailing notions expressed by this grunt. Why should it not be the *nar* iculate base of the articulate $m\alpha\acute{g}h-$, 'big'?

II. ENGLISH *spray*=GERMAN *spren*, 'CHAFF.'

Neither Skeat nor Kluge in their etymological dictionaries recognize the kinship of these words. The phonetics is entirely normal, cf. *hay*=German *heu*. The semasic relation is absolutely perspicuous, as Gk. $\alpha\chi\rho\eta$ 'spray,' 'chaff,' shows.

III. GERMAN *streu*, 'STRAW.'

The vocalization of *streu* is abnormal, and has never been explained. It was, I suggest, semasically associated at an early Germanic period with *heu*, 'hay,' and *spren*, 'chaff,'

² Cf. Brugmann, *Gr.*, ii, §434, and Lindsay, *Latin Language*, ch. x, §1.

³ MOD. LANG. NOTES, vol. ix, col. 270.

⁴ *Am. J. Phil.*, xv, 414; cf. Dabney's *Don Miff*, Ch. xxx, for further illustration. One of Dabney's spellings is *m'h'm*, and another *umgh*.